

WORLD AREA RESEARCH COMMITTEE

9:30 a.m., Friday, March 30, 1951, Room H, Chamber of Commerce Building, 1615 H Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C.

Present: Robert B. Hall, Chairman, Ralph L. Beals, Wendell C. Bennett,
W. Norman Brown, Donald C. McKay, George E. Taylor, Bryce Wood.

Also Present: J. Milton Cowan, Cornell University, L. Gray Cowan, Columbia University, Harold Deutsch, University of Minnesota, David G. Mandelbaum, University of California (Berkeley), Philip E. Mosely, Columbia University, Lauriston Sharp, Cornell University, Frank S. Hopkins, Acting Director, Foreign Service Institute, Department of State, Henry L. Smith, Jr. Assistant Director, Foreign Service Institute, Department of State.

I. "A Project for Training Area Specialists"

A. Recent Developments

Mr. Wood reported that the chief development since the meeting of the ad hoc interagency group, the minutes of which had been circulated, was the sending to the interested agencies by the Bureau of the Budget of the draft of a letter for President Truman's signature. The draft letter, addressed to the Secretary of State, asked that the Department of State take the lead in forming an interagency committee to:

- (1) define governmental requirements for area specialists;
- (2) survey university facilities;
- (3) make recommendations concerning existing authority for governmental use of external training facilities.

The making of "recommendations" would presumably involve the drafting of legislation. It was hoped that the letter might be signed by the President within a few days.

Mr. Hopkins stated that because of the importance of the problem of deferment, and because of the desire of the Department of State to avoid taking the lead in a manpower program, the Department's response to the draft of the presidential letter was a proposal that the interagency committee be chaired by a member of the staff of the National Security Resources Board. Conversations were under way between Walker K. Scott, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Administration, and Elmer A. Staats, Assistant Director, Bureau of the Budget.

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The Department of State was interested both in the SSRC's project, and in area training for employees of the Department. This latter type of training was apparently the sole interest of officials in ECA and CIA. Mr. Hopkins had recommended that the Department employ 200 men next year, and 200 the following year, for a two year program of study along the lines suggested in the SSRC memorandum. The third year for each student would, it was hoped, be devoted to field work of a research character for the Department. Including the requirements of CIA and ECA, the total governmental demand for area specialists was expected to be about 500 per year for the next several years. The needs, by areas and disciplines, would be worked out by the interagency committee.

Government agencies would make grants-in-aid to universities to make possible necessary expansion of area center facilities, but each agency felt that it could not finance open scholarships for the reason that then it would not be certain of securing the services of the students at the end of the training period.

B. Prospects

1. Position of the SSRC "Project"

Mr. Bennett said that it was clear that the original project could not, in the present circumstances, receive governmental financing in the form of fellowships like those given by the Atomic Energy Commission. Draft problems and the urgent demand for personnel by new and growing agencies had concentrated governmental attention on training for employees. However, the need for the highest type of area specialist remained; a considerable number of teachers and research scholars must be produced both for the advancement of knowledge and the training of additional government personnel. He suggested two ways in which this purpose might be given partial fulfillment even though open scholarships would apparently not be available. One method would involve the selection of young men, already possessing a Ph.D. degree in a social science, for training under one of the agency area programs. They would presumably be required to serve in a government post for a time after the completion of their training but they might later serve as members of the staff of an area center. The second method would permit the employment of graduate students on research projects financed by contracts between government agencies and area centers. Mr. Hopkins thought arrangements of this character might be feasible; he suggested that Evron M. Kirkpatrick of the External Research Staff, Office of Intelligence Research, Department of State, would probably be the point of contact for research contracts with the Department.

2. Timing

One factor which would delay commencement of the training period would be the requirement of prior security clearance for persons on the payrolls of the government agencies. Clearance required a minimum of three and a maximum of six months. It was hoped, nevertheless, that definite information about governmental needs might be obtained shortly, if the

universities were to arrange an expansion of their staffs by September. There seemed to be some feeling that the danger of dispersal of staffs was now rather less than had at first been considered probable, but stress was also placed upon the view that the several-month period between the present and the time when government employees in substantial numbers would arrive in the area centers, was the "critical time" and the hope was expressed that private sources of funds might be found which would assure the maintenance of research and training activity at high levels in this protracted interim.

3. Qualifications of Students

The question was raised whether universities would have the right to reject government employed students who were not qualified to complete their studies at a satisfactory level. Mr. Hopkins said he thought that officials of ECA and CIA would agree with his view that students doing unsatisfactory work need not be continued in classes just because they had been sent to an area center as employees of a government agency.

4. Legislative Problems

Mr. Hopkins pointed out that there were serious obstacles which still lay ahead. The interagency committee would be able to perform certain useful functions of coordination and planning following the issuance of the presidential letter, but an operating training program involved in addition: (a) some arrangement on deferment; (b) the assurance of budgetary arrangements within each agency and then by the Bureau of the Budget; (c) passage of deficiency appropriations through the necessary Congressional steps, including, for some agencies, preliminary authorization to pay for training outside the government. The suggestion was made that, subsequent to the establishment of the interagency committee, representatives of the SSRC might endeavor to interest members of Congress in supporting a fellowship program along the lines of the "Project."

5. Types of Training

Mr. Smith said the Foreign Service Institute thought there existed a governmental need for three types of trainees:

- a. social science - area specialists
- b. military personnel desiring language training only
- c. an intermediate group for which various combinations of language and area training would be desired, for periods of from one to two years.

As an illustration, Mr. Hopkins said he had received a memorandum from Professor Bruce Smith of the FSI proposing a special course of training for a group of twenty-five persons who would do field work of a specialized type. The course would include:

- a. 3-months language course at the FSI
- b. one semester of area training at a university
- c. one semester in the fields of public opinion and intercultural communications at a university.

It was recognized that it was difficult to combine disciplinary and area training in a single year's work, but because of governmental urgencies there was no time available for further formal instruction.

Concern was expressed lest the quality of research or instruction at the area centers be lowered as a result of the heavier teaching requirements of governmental programs; it was pointed out, however, that there was little likelihood of a return of mass instruction, as under the ASTP, particularly since the Army and Navy language schools were now capable of handling large numbers of students.

6. Observations

Mr. Mosely said he thought the policy of the government agencies in selecting employees for training was unwise. There would be many misfits if the choice were made from college seniors, and the cost of the program to the government would be high since it would be paying salaries instead of fellowship stipends. He thought in addition, that a fellowship program could be put into operation sooner than the employee training plan, and he hoped that efforts to obtain governmental support for the SSRC plan would not be given up. Responses from various members supported this view, and emphasis was again placed on the effective fellowship value of research contracts. The opinion was also expressed that if government trainees were chosen as carefully as recent entrants into the Foreign Service, there would be little need for concern about the quality of their work in the area centers.

7. Committee Action

Representatives of the universities reported on the numbers and status of graduate students in the area centers on their campuses. This information is not included in the minutes of the meeting since it was decided that more complete information was desired, and the staff was requested to prepare a questionnaire on the basis of which reports would be sent in by those attending the meeting. The data relating, i.e., to area center facilities, students at present in the centers, estimated possibilities of expansion, and estimated instruction costs per student, would be collated and would be available to the Committee and to the SSRC staff for purposes of consultation with the proposed interagency committee. It was hoped that returns would be made by the middle of April.

II. Carnegie Corporation Catalog of Area Centers

The question was raised whether a new edition of this catalog should be made under the auspices of the SSRC. It was the sense of the committee that sponsorship by it or the SSRC would be undesirable, partly because the catalog had been authorized and prepared elsewhere, and partly because it was felt that the title "area center," should not be given with the committee's sanction, either inclusively or exclusively, to the institutions listed in this compilation.

It was felt that the Chairman should suggest to the Carnegie Corporation that the comprehensive survey of area centers now being made in the Office of Educational Exchange, Department of State, might be regarded as fulfilling the purposes for which the catalog was intended. Alternatively, it was thought that sponsorship should rest with the originators of the catalog project.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Bryce Wood